



eNews from Sen. Lisa Murkowski - Vol. 2, Issue 11 :: [Visit Senator Murkowski's Web Site](#)
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Murkowski Attends Veterans Wheelchair Games, Meets with VA Secretary

We often think of Veterans Day as a single day in November, but every day from July 3-8 was Veterans Day in Anchorage as the community went all out to support the 26th National Veterans Wheelchair Games. More than 525 veterans traveled to Alaska to participate in the games. Sadly, George Pikus, the Vietnam veteran from Kodiak, who was the leading force in bringing the games to Alaska, could not be on hand to see his dream come to fruition. While George passed away on February 24, 2005, his spirit was felt throughout the events.

Among the spectators was Jim Nicholson, Secretary of Veterans Affairs, who graciously agreed to participate in a brownbag lunch in my Anchorage office with representatives from the American Legion, AMVETS, Disabled American Veterans and the Veterans of Foreign Wars to discuss ways to improve the VA's service in Alaska. We discussed a range of issues including the distances Alaska veterans must travel to receive health care, the out of pocket housing costs a veteran must pay while receiving care in Anchorage or Seattle, the need for a permanent Decision Review Officer in Alaska and problems with the VA's automated pharmacy system. I am hopeful that Secretary Nicholson now has a better understanding of the challenges facing veterans in Alaska.



Discussing the Games with Secretary Nicholson

September 9th Designated National Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Awareness Day

The United States Senate unanimously passed my resolution to designate September 9, 2006 as National Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Awareness Day. Tragically, Alaska has the highest rate of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorders (FASD) in the nation. Approximately 163 Alaskan babies are born each year affected by maternal alcohol use during pregnancy. Among Alaskan Native communities, the rate of FASD is 15 times higher than non-Native areas in the state.

The alarming numbers of children born each year with FASD should motivate all Americans to raise awareness about a disease that is 100% preventable. Our investment today in prevention, treatment and research will help ensure that fewer and fewer children will become afflicted with FASD and will save in future health costs of this devastating disorder.

The resolution encourages the American people to promote awareness of the effects of prenatal exposure to alcohol; to increase compassion for individuals affected by prenatal exposure to alcohol; to minimize further effects of prenatal exposure to alcohol; and to ensure healthier communities throughout the United States. On National Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Awareness day, Americans are also encouraged to observe a moment of reflection on the ninth hour of September 9, 2006, to remember that during the nine months of pregnancy a woman should not consume any alcohol.

Murkowski Welcomes Second Session Interns

I was pleased to welcome a new group of summer interns to my Capitol Hill office this week. The interns will spend four weeks in the Senate assisting with legislative and constituent duties. This group includes: Colin Palmer from Eagle River, Jeremy Knowles from Anchorage, Jerrica Lawson from Eagle River, Alida Trainor from Fairbanks/Eagle, Kylee Beatus from Hughes, Vanessa Packer from Barrow, Meghan Jones from Wasilla, Amber Sawyer from Wasilla, Jessica Untiet from Fairbanks and Celeste Gillespie from Anchorage.



Discussing Issues with New Interns

Murkowski Urges HHS to Reconsider Medicaid Eligibility Documentation

I have urged Health and Human Services Secretary Michael Leavitt to have the Department issue additional guidance that allows tribal enrollment documentation to be used to establish citizenship and identity for those applying for Medicaid. [Download a copy of the letter.](#)

HHS has since provided for a public comment period on this issue until August 11, 2006.

Murkowski Presented with Second Golden Gavel

I was honored to receive my second golden gavel in recognition of my presiding over the Senate for 100 hours.



Murkowski Addresses AFN 2006 Leadership Conference

I was honored to once again have the opportunity to provide opening remarks for the Alaska Federation of Natives Leadership Forum. Each year AFN hosts a summer conference to explore ways to foster economic development in Native communities statewide. I have participated in each conference and appreciate the dialogue that they produce. For a copy of my speech, and to download other speeches, you can visit the [speeches section of my website](#).

Alaska Libraries Receive Laura Bush Grants

The Laura Bush Foundation for America's Libraries announced that 206 school libraries, including four in Alaska, are being collectively awarded more than \$1 million in grants. The Alaska school libraries are at the Chevak School, the Chief Paul Memorial School in Kipnuk, Innoko River School in Shageluk, and the John Apangalook School in Savoonga. The foundation provides grants of up to \$5,000 each to extend the collections of America's school libraries.



Hauling in a 65-lb. Kenai King and Proving Once Again that the Slogan Regarding Alaska Girls is True

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